

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 29183

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION (WEU) PARIS ASSEMBLY

MEETING: FRANCE REAFFIRMS DETERMINATION TO STAY OUT OF
NATO COMMAND

SUMMARY: FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE MINISTRY

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OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BERNARD DESTREMAU, SPEAKING BEFORE

THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION ASSEMBLY' REAFFIRMED FRANCE'S DECISION TO STAY OUT OF THE NATO MILITARY COMMAND. HE DID NOT REVIVE JOBERT'S IDEA THAT THE WEU COULD PLAY A MORE POSITIVE ROLE IN ORGANIZING A EUROPEAN DEFENSE. END SUMMARY.

1. DESTREMAU ADDRESSED SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION ASSEMBLY IN PARIS DECEMBER 4. AFTER ASSERTING THAT FRANCE COULD CONTINUE A POLICY OF DETENTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION (SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF LEONID BREZHNEV WAS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE A FEW HOURS AFTER DESTREMAU'S SPEECH), DESTREMAU STRESSED THE NEED FOR EUROPE TO DEVELOP ITS POLITICAL WILL. EUROPE HAS MADE REAL PROGRESS SINCE WORLD WAR II, DESTREMAU SAID, AND CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO, EVEN IN THE FACE OF TEMPORARY SETBACKS. HE ARGUED THAT DEFENSE AND DETENTE OFFER POSSIBILITIES OF INCREASED EUROPEAN COOPERATION, AND THAT "EUROPE OF THE 7 OR 9" WHATEVER IT IS" CAN FIND A COMMON ENERGY POLICY.

2. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS' DESTREMAU UNDERLINED HIS GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO STAY INDEPENDENT OF NATO'S MILITARY STRUCTURE. "FRANCE HAS NO INTENTION, I REPEAT' HAS NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF REJOINING NATO AS A FULL MEMBER". DESTREMAU ADDED THAT MANY LINKS REMAIN BETWEEN FRANCE AND NATO AND THAT FRANCE PARTICIPATES IN THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. CONCERNING A POSSIBLE ROLE FOR THE WEU IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE, DESTREMAU SAID THAT THE VALUE OF THE WEU WILL BECOME EVIDENT ONLY WHEN THE POLITICAL WILL COMES INTO BEING TO DO MORE FOR THE COMMON EUROPEAN DEFENSE.

3. COMMENT: DESTREMAU, FORMERLY CHAIRMAN OF THE WEU ASSEMBLY'S DEFENSE COMMITTEE, BROKE NO NEW GROUND IN HIS ADDRESS BEFORE HIS FORMER COLLEAGUES. HE DID NOT MENTION THE UNITED STATES OR ATLANTIC RELATIONS, NOR DID HE OFFER ANY CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION. HIS SPEECH SUGGESTS THAT FRANCE HAS DROPPED -- AT LEAST FOR THE TIME

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BEING -- FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT'S IDEA OF USING THE WEU AS ARENA FOR "DISCUSSION OF AND REFLECTION ON" EUROPE'S ORGANIZATION OF ITS OWN DEFENSE. HIS REASSERTION OF FRANCE'S INTENT TO REMAIN OUTSIDE OF NATO'S MILITARY STRUCTURE SIMPLY RESTATES THE ALREADY CLEAR POLICY OF GISCARD GOVERNMENT ON THIS POINT.

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